

THE GREAT SPOON DEBATE: Understanding Foreign Interference in 5 Steps

To date, we have no evidence of any nation actively carrying out information operations regarding the proper way to consume frozen lemonade. This infographic is an ILLUSTRATION of how information operations have been carried out in the past to exploit divisions in the United States.

1. TARGETING DIVISIVE ISSUES

Foreign influencers are constantly on the lookout for opportunities to inflame hot button issues in the United States. They don't do this to win arguments; *they want to see us divided.*



2. MOVING ACCOUNTS INTO PLACE

Building social media accounts with a large following takes time and resources, so accounts are often renamed and reused. Multiple accounts in a conversation are often controlled by the same user.

Pro Tip: Look at an account's activity history. Genuine accounts usually have several interests and post content from a variety of sources.



3. AMPLIFYING AND DISTORTING THE CONVERSATION

Americans often engage in healthy debate on any number of topics. Foreign influencers try to pollute those debates with bad information and make our positions more extreme by picking fights or “trolling” people online.

Pro Tip: Trolls try to make people mad, that's it. If it seems like an account is only aiming to raise tensions, think about whether it's worth engaging.



4. MAKING THE MAINSTREAM

Foreign influencers “fan the flames” by creating controversy, amplifying the most extreme version of arguments on both sides of an issue. These are shared online as legitimate information sources.

Sometimes controversies make it into the mainstream and create division among Americans. This is a foreign influencer striking gold! Their meddling is legitimized and carried to larger audiences.

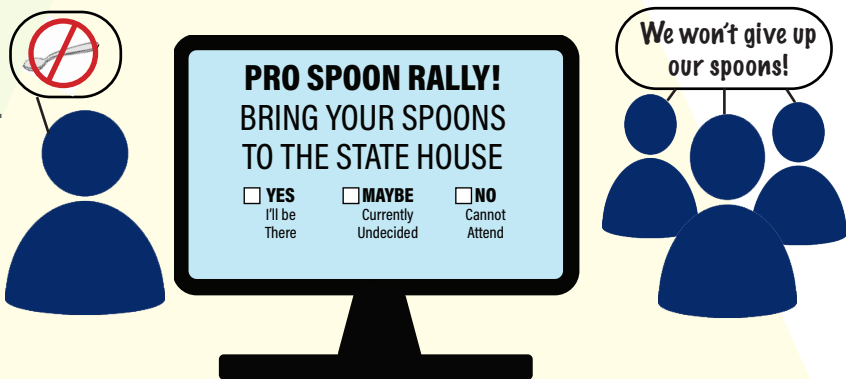


5. TAKING THE CONVERSATION INTO THE REAL WORLD

In the past, Kremlin agents have organized or funded protests to further stoke divisions among Americans. They create event pages and ask followers to come out.

What started in cyberspace can turn very real, with Americans shouting down Americans because of foreign interference.

Pro Tip: Many social media companies have increased transparency for organization accounts. Know who is inviting you and why.



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